



e-Invoicing Framework

General Overview



Business Payments Coalition

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1 Introduction

1.1 Scope

This document is intended to offer an overview of the BPC e-Invoice Framework—its structure, operation, and governance—as well as the roles and responsibilities of Service Providers.

1.2 Terms and Definitions

For the purpose of this document, all terms shall have the definitions defined in section 2.3 of the *E-invoice Exchange Framework – Approach to Managing a Federated Registry Services Model in a Four-Corner Network* report found here: [e-invoice Exchange Framework: Approach to Managing a Federated Registry Services Model in a Four-Corner Network](#)

1.3 Disclaimers and Copyright

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2 The BPC Document Exchange Framework

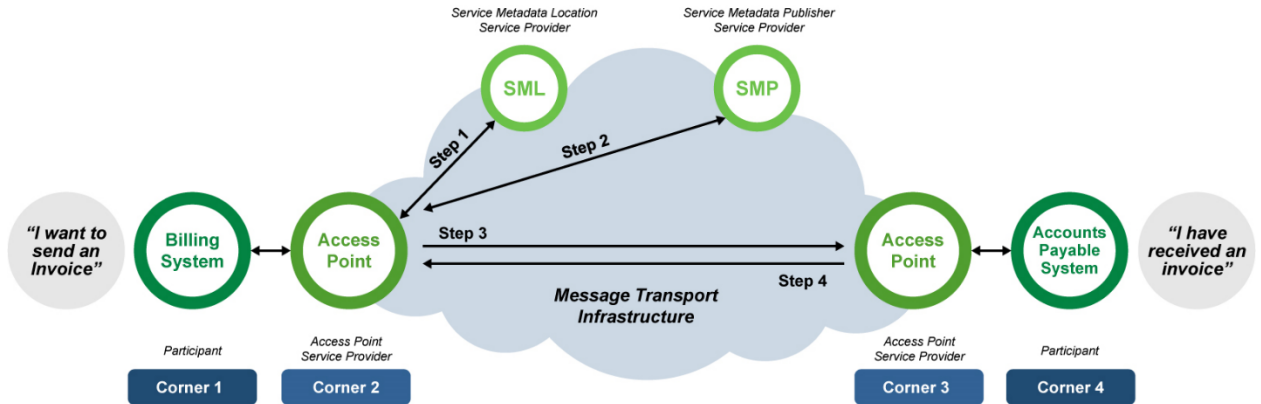


Figure 1. The four-corner document exchange framework

2.1 Structure

The BPC Document Exchange Framework (the Framework) utilizes a four-corner model, as shown in Figure 1. The Corner 1 Participant (C1) is the seller of goods, while the Corner 4 Participant (C4) is the buyer of goods. Corner 2 (C2) and Corner 3 (C3) are Access Points (AP) which handle the actual interchange of invoice and remittance data. The actions performed by the APs fall into the following three categories: Data (packaging the invoice and remittance information), Discovery (connecting with other businesses), and Delivery (delivering the invoice and remittance information).

2.2 Operation

Invoicing

1. The Participant at C1 creates an invoice and transfers it to their registered AP provider (C2).
2. Data: C2 creates and encrypts a data payload by packaging the invoice data according to the BPC e-invoice semantic data model.
3. Discovery: C2 performs a Service Metadata Location (SML) lookup to determine the network location of the buyer's Service Metadata Publisher (SMP).
4. Discovery: C2 queries the discovered SMP to determine the document capabilities of the Participant at C4 and the network location of C4's registered AP.
5. Delivery: C2 sends the invoice data payload to C3.
6. Delivery: C3 decrypts the invoice data payload and transfers it to C4.

Remittance

7. C4 creates a remittance message and delivers it to C3.
8. C3 encrypts the remittance message and sends it to C2.
9. C2 decrypts the remittance message and delivers it to C1.

2.3 Governance

The Framework is governed by an oversight organization whose responsibilities include:

- Establishing appropriate policies and procedures to ensure technical and non-technical interoperability and compliance amongst network Service Providers.
- Providing sufficient administrative support to develop and document policy, procedures, operational rules, and agreements.
- Providing sufficient support for the ongoing improvement and maintenance of the exchange framework standards.
- Providing sufficient support for adoption and promotional activities to network Service Providers. Providing sufficient capabilities and resources to measure the progress of adoption, participation, and compliance.
- Providing effective support for cooperation and participation with Standards Development Organizations in a liaison and advisory capacity, and in some cases, with memoranda of understanding.
- Establishing and maintaining transparent oversight rules and guidelines that are publicly accessible at no cost.
- Providing active support to address implementation questions for small businesses.

Day-to-day operating responsibilities are handled by:

- the Certificate Authority Custodian, who manages the Access Point enrollee certificates; and
- Independent Service Providers who provide their customers with services such as Access Point and/or Service Metadata Publisher (SMP).

3 Service Provider Roles and Responsibilities

Participants require both Access Point and SMP services to participate in the e-invoicing framework. Service Providers (SP) furnish these services to Participants on a negotiated fee basis. (Participants choose their SPs from a group of BPC-approved vendors, and an SP can provide either or both AP and SMP services.)

In the role of Access Point, SPs perform the tasks attributed to C2 and C3 in Section 2.2 above. They also maintain the list of C1s (businesses sending e-invoices) and C4s (businesses receiving e-invoices) when they onboard any new end points (i.e., customers) to the framework.

As SMP providers, SPs maintain the metadata about the capabilities of Participants in the network. Metadata includes information about business document types and formats that the participant can receive, business processes supported or implemented by the participant, what information the participant expects to receive within a certain business document, as well as information about the technical endpoint(s) and transport protocol(s) where the participant will receive business documents.

Items requiring additional oversight include:

- Version control, including compatibility requirements
- Change management policy requirements for adopting changes by members. Define and manage a process that is specific to SMP changes and considers cost and impact to members